

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 were previously pending, of which claims 1, 6, and 16 were previously presented, and claims 2-5, 7-15, and 17-30 remain in their original form. Reconsideration of presently pending claims 1-30 is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

Noted with appreciation is the indication that claim 6 has been allowed. Also noted with appreciation is the indication that claims 4, 19, and 21 are directed at allowable subject matter, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. However, claims 4, 19, and 21 depend from rejected claims but, for reasons set forth below, it is believed that the rejected claims are also allowable. Therefore, it is believed to be unnecessary to separately place claims 4, 19, and 21 in independent form at this time.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 recites:

A method of communicating semiconductor manufacturing information, the method comprising:
 providing, by a first service provider, a lot of semiconductor components to a second service provider for processing;
 receiving, by the first service provider, first information associated with the processing, from the second service provider;
 generating, by the first service provider, second information responsive to the first information; and
 outputting, by the first service provider, the second information to a customer affiliated with the second service provider.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Matsuda (US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0143650 A1 hereinafter referred to as "Matsuda"). The PTO provides in MPEP §2131 that "[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim." Therefore, to sustain this rejection with respect to claim 1, Matsuda must contain all of the above claimed elements of the claim.

In the Response to Arguments section, the Office Action asserts that “Matsuda’s mask manufacturer is the first service provider (Fig. 1, #2) and the semiconductor device manufacturer is the second service provider (Fig. 1, #1).” The Office Action goes on and asserts that “Matsuda teaches the delivery of semiconductor mask products from the first provider to the second provider (pg. 2, [paragraph 23]).” (See Office Action, pg. 2) (Emphasis added). However, Matsuda does not teach “receiving, by the first service provider [Matsuda’s mask manufacturer], first information associated with processing [of the delivered mask products], from the second provider [Matsuda’s semiconductor device manufacturer],” as is recited in claim 1. The Office Action alleges that this step is disclosed in paragraph [0023] and reference number 21 in Fig. 1 of Matsuda. (See Office Action, pg. 3). Applicants respectfully disagree. The cited passage of Matsuda recites the following:

For example, the engineering department 4 of the semiconductor device manufacture 1 informs the engineering department 11 of the mask manufacturer 2 of information 21, such as order information about the development mask 6 required for prototyping a semiconductor product under development, a desired delivery time, mask specifications, and a future development plan. In response to the information 21, the mask manufacturer 2 returns, in reply to the semiconductor device manufacturer 1, information 22 such as progress in manufacture of a mask, the status of a mask in process, and the shipment status and delivery time of mask products. Similarly, information is exchanged between the semiconductor device manufacturer 1 and the mask manufacturer 2, as designated by 23 and 24, in relation to the special-specification mask 7. (Emphasis added).

From the above, the information (reference number 21 in Fig. 1) that is received by the first service provider (Matsuda’s mask manufacturer) from the second service provider (Matsuda’s semiconductor device manufacturer) is not “first information associated with processing [of the delivered mask products from the first service provider to the second service provider].” In contrast, the information that is cited by the Office Action is associated with “order information about the development mask 6 required for prototyping a semiconductor product under development, a desired delivery time, mask specifications, and a future development plan.”

Accordingly, the mask products have not even been manufactured by the first service provider (Matsuda's mask manufacturer) at this point and thus, the information asserted by the Office Action cannot be associated with the processing of the delivered mask products. Claim 1 recites in part, "providing, by a first service provider, a lot of semiconductor components to a second service provider for processing" and "receiving, by the first service provider, first information associated with the processing, from the second service provider."

Therefore, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 of claim 1 is not supported by the Matsuda reference, and should be withdrawn.

Now turning to independent claim 16. Claim 16 was rejected under the same rationale as claim 1. Accordingly, claim 16 is allowable for at least the same reasons as set forth above for claim 1. Therefore, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 of claim 16 is not supported by the Matsuda reference, and should be withdrawn.

Dependent Claims

Dependent claims 2-5, 7-15, and 17-30 depend from, either directly or indirectly, and further limit independent claims 1 and 16 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as set forth above for claims 1 and 16.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the foregoing that independent claims 1, 6, and 16 are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 2-5, 7-15, and 17-30 depend from, either directly or indirectly, and further limit independent claims 1 and 16 and, therefore, are allowable as well.

Favorable consideration and an early indication of the allowance of the claims are respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed number if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

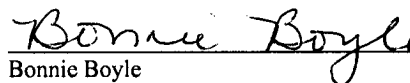


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